PLEASE AMEND THE CLAIMS AS FOLLOWS:

Please replace the appropriate claims with the clean versions provided below.

A1

8. (AMENDED) A method of increasing the antigenicity of recombinant hepatitis B surface antigen (rHBsAg) comprising:

a) providing soluble sterile filtered rHBsAg purified from a cell culture,

b) adding a redox buffer to the rHBsAg,

c) adjusting the temperature to about 34°C to about 38°C,

d) incubating the rHBsAg at about 34°C to about 38°C for about 40 to about 240 hours,

wherein the antigenicity of the rHBsAg produced after step d is greater than the antigenicity of the rHBsAg provided in step a.

A2

14. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim 13 wherein the ratio of thiol to disulfide is selected from the group consisting of about 20:1, about 10:1, about 10:4, about 5:1, about 2:1 and about 1:1.

A3

19. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim 18 further comprising the steps of

g) adding an aluminum adjuvant, and

h) co-precipitating the rHBsAg and the adjuvant.

PLEASE AMEND THE SPECIFICATION AS FOLLOWS:

A4

At page 2, line 21, after "(Wampler *et al.* 1985" insert –. Multiple chemical forms of hepatitis B surface antigen. *Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci.* 82:6830-6834.—

A5

At page 4, at the end of line 32, insert –Vk gene region DNA sequence is SEQ ID NO 3. Vh gene region DNA sequence is SEQ ID NO 4. –

VERSION OF AMENDED CLAIMS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

8. (AMENDED) A method of [making] increasing the antigenicity of recombinant hepatitis B surface antigen (rHBsAg) comprising:

a) providing soluble sterile filtered rHBsAg purified from a cell culture,

b) adding a redox buffer to the rHBsAg,

c) adjusting the temperature to [from] about 34°C to about 38°C,

d) incubating the rHBsAg at about 34°C to about 38°C for about 40 to about 240 hours[.],

wherein the antigenicity of the rHBsAg produced after step d is greater than the antigenicity of the rHBsAg provided in step a.

14. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim 13 wherein the ratio of [glutathione] thiol to [oxidized glutathione] disulfide is selected from the group consisting of about 20:1, about 10:1, about 10:4, about 5:1, about 2:1 and about 1:1.

19. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim [17] 18 further comprising the steps of

g) adding an aluminum adjuvant, and

h) co-precipitating the rHBsAg and the adjuvant.